## IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for centralizing a capital expenditure approval process for capital expenditures by employees in various departments of a company comprising the steps of:

a) identifying a ~~defined~~ number of departments within the company;

b) determining factors which are to be considered as a prerequisite to an approval of a plurality of capital expenditures, at least one capital expenditure sought by employees in each department;

c) using the ~~determined~~ factors of step b) to further determine a ~~defined~~ number of levels of approvals required for each capital expenditure of the plurality of capital expenditures;

d) creating a database for ~~the~~ an online computer system which stores ~~the~~ an identification of the departments, the factors which are to be considered, and the ~~requisite~~ levels of approvals of step c);

e) inputting, into the online computer system, information about a desired capital expenditure including ~~the~~ a department which wants to incur the capital expenditure, and the factors which are to be considered as a prerequisite of the approval of the desired capital expenditure, the desired capital expenditure being one of the plurality of the capital expenditures;

f) using the online computer system to compare the ~~inputted~~ department identification of the department which wants to incur the capital expenditure inputted in step e) and the factors which are to be considered as the prerequisite of the approval of the desired capital expenditure with the database and generating a table of requisite approvers for the desired capital expenditure based on at least ~~the~~ a requisite number of approvals; and

g) electronically routing the inputted information to each of the requisite approvers.


2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of identifying a ~~defined~~ number

2

of departments includes the step of identifying all of the departments.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the factors which must be considered are the nature of the item to be purchased and the cost of the item.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the inputted information is routed to the requisite approvers in a sequential manner.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the method is performed by a computer system.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the method is incorporated into software.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) A method used in a computer system for centralizing a capital expenditure approval process for capital expenditures by employees in various departments of a company comprising the steps of:

    a)    identifying a ~~defined~~ number of departments within the company;

    b)    determining factors which are to be considered as a prerequisite to an approval of a plurality of capital expenditures sought by employees in each department;

    c)    using the ~~determined~~ factors <u>of step b)</u> to further determine a ~~defined~~ number of levels

of approvals required for each capital expenditure of the plurality of capital expenditures;

    d)    creating a database for ~~the~~ an online computer system which stores ~~the~~ an identification of the departments, the factors which are to be considered, and the ~~requisite~~ levels of approvals of step c);

    e)    inputting, into ~~the~~ an online computer system, information about a desired capital expenditure including ~~the~~ a department which wants to incur the capital expenditure, and the factors which are to be considered as the prerequisite of the desired capital expenditure, the desired capital expenditure one of the plurality of the capital expenditures;

    f)    using the online computer system to compare the ~~inputted~~ department identification of the department which wants to incur the capital expenditure inputted in step e) and the factors which are to be considered as a prerequisite of the approval of the desired capital expenditure with the database and generating a table of requisite approvers for the desired capital expenditure based on at least ~~the~~ a requisite number of approvals;

    g)    electronically routing the inputted information to each of the requisite approvers;

    h)    generating an approval notification or a non-approval notification of the desired capital expenditure; and

    i)    if the online computer system generates the ~~disapproval~~ non-approval notification:

    i) resubmitting, into the online computer system, information about the desired capital expenditure; and

    ii) submitting new information pertaining to the desired capital expenditure.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein the step of identifying a ~~defined~~ number of departments includes the step of identifying all of the departments.

10. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein the factors which must be considered are the nature of the item to be purchased and the cost of the item.

11. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein the inputted information is routed to the requisite approvers in a sequential manner.

12. (Currently Amended) A computer system for centralizing a capital expenditure approval process for capital expenditures by employees in various departments of a company comprising one or more computers and computer readable code embodying instructions executable by the one or more computers, the computer system comprising computer readable code devices configured to cause the one or more computers to effect the

a) identification of a ~~defined~~ number of departments within the company;

b) determination of factors which are to be considered as a prerequisite to an approval of a plurality of capital expenditures, at least one capital expenditure sought by employees in each department;

c) use of the ~~determined~~ factors <u>of step b)</u> to further determine a ~~defined~~ number of levels of approvals required for each capital expenditure of the plurality of capital expenditures;

d) creation of a database for the online computer system which stores ~~the~~ <u>an</u> identification of the

departments, the factors which are to be considered, and the ~~requisite~~ levels of approvals <u>of step c)</u>;

e) inputting, into the online <u>computer</u> system, information about a desired capital expenditure including ~~the~~ <u>a</u> department which wants to incur the capital expenditure, and the factors which are to be considered as a prerequisite of the approval of the desired capital expenditure, the desired capital expenditure one of the plurality of the capital expenditures;

f) use of the online computer system to compare the ~~inputted~~ department identification <u>of the department which wants to incur the capital expenditure inputted in step e)</u> and the factors which are to be considered as the prerequisite of the approval of the desired capital expenditure with the database and generating a table of requisite approvers for the desired capital expenditure based on at least ~~the~~ <u>a</u> requisite number of approvals; and

g) electronic routing the inputted information to each of the requisite approvers.

13. (Currently Amended) The computer system of claim 12 wherein the identification of a ~~defined~~ number of departments includes the identification of all of the departments.

14. (Original) The computer system of claim 12 wherein the factors which must be considered are the nature of the item to be purchased and the cost of the item.

15. (Original) The computer system of claim 12 wherein the inputted information is routed to the requisite approvers in a sequential manner.

16. (Currently Amended) A computer data signal embodied in a transmission medium for centralizing the capital expenditure approval process for capital expenditures by employees in various departments of a company, the computer data signal comprising a code segment including instructions for

a) identifying a ~~defined~~ number of departments within the company;

b) determining factors which are to be considered as a prerequisite to the approval of a plurality of capital expenditures, at least one capital expenditure sought by employees in each department;

c) using the ~~determined~~ factors <u>of step b)</u> to further determine a ~~defined~~ number of levels of approvals required for each capital expenditure of the plurality of capital expenditures;

d) creating a database for ~~the~~ <u>an</u> online computer system which stores ~~the~~ <u>an</u> identification of the departments, the factors which are to be considered, and the ~~requisite~~ levels of approvals <u>of step c)</u>;

e) inputting into ~~the~~ <u>an</u> online <u>computer</u> system information about a desired capital expenditure including ~~the~~ <u>a</u> department which wants to incur the expenditure, and the factors which are to be considered as a prerequisite of the approval of the desired capital expenditure, the desired capital expenditure one of the plurality of the capital expenditures;

f) using the online computer system to compare the ~~inputted~~ department identification <u>of</u> <u>the department which wants to incur the capital expenditure inputted in step e)</u> and the created inputted factors with the database and generating a table of requisite approvers for the desired capital expenditure based on at least ~~the~~ <u>a</u> requisite number of approvals;

7

g)      electronically routing the inputted information to each of the requisite approvers;

h)      generating either an approval notification or a non-approval notification; and

i)      if the online computer system generates the ~~disapproval~~ non-approval notification:

i) resubmitting into the online computer system information about the desired capital expenditure; and

ii) submitting new information pertaining to the desired capital expenditure.

17. (Currently Amended) The computer data signal of claim 16 wherein the instructions for identifying a ~~defined~~ number of departments include instructions for identifying all of the departments.

18. (Original) The computer data signal of claim 16 wherein the factors which must be considered are the nature of the item to be purchased and the cost of the item.

19. (Original) The computer data signal of claim 16 wherein the inputted information is routed to the requisite approvers in a sequential manner.